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Samuel · McChord Crothers

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Raymond F. West Memorial Lectures on Immortality, Human Conduct, and Human Destiny

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WHY WE MAY BELIEVE IN LIFE AFTER DEATH. By Charles Edward Jefferson. 1911.

THREE LORDS OF DESTINY. By Samuel McChord Crothers. 1913.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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THREE LORDS OF DESTINY

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Raymond F. West Memorial Lectures

THREE LORDS OF DESTINY

BY

SAMUEL McCHORD CROTHERS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS volume represents the second of the series of Raymond F. West Memorial Lectures at the Leland Stanford Junior University. These lectures were delivered on April 22 and 23, 1913, by Rev. Samuel McChord Crothers, D.D., of the First Unitarian Church of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The conditions of the lectureship are set forth in the following letter from its founders:

In memory of our beloved son, Raymond Frederic West, a student in Leland Stanford Junior University, who was drowned in Eel River, in California, on January 18, 1906, before the completion of his college course, we wish to present to the trustees and authorities of the Leland Stanford Junior University, at Palo Alto, California, the honored Alma Mater of our son, the sum of ten thousand dollars ($10,000), to be held as a fund in perpetual trust, for the establishment of a lecturship on a plan similar to the

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Dudleian Lectures and the Ingersoll Lectures at Harvard University.

By this plan, in each collegiate year, or on each alternate year, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, from one to three lectures shall be given on some phase of this subject: "Immortality, Human Conduct, and Human Destiny."

Such lectures shall not form a part of the usual college or university course, nor shall they be delivered by any professor or instructor in active service in the institution. Such lecturer may be a clergyman or a layman, a member of any ecclesiastical organization, or of none, but he should be a man of the highest personal character and of superior intellectual endowment. He shall be chosen by the Faculty and the Board of Trustees of said University in such manner as the Board of Trustees may determine, but the appointment in any case shall be made at least six months before the delivery of said lectures.

The above sum is to be safely invested, and the interest thereof is to be divided, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, into two parts, the one an honorarium to the lecturer, the other for the publication of the said lectures or the gratuitous

distribution of a number of copies of the same if published by the author.

The manuscript of the course of lectures shall become the property of the University, and shall be published by the University unless some other form of publication is more acceptable.

The course of lectures shall be known as the "Raymond F. West Memorial Lectures on Immortality, Human Conduct, and Human Destiny."

F. W. WEST,
MARY B. WEST.

SEATTLE, WASH.,
January 18, 1910.

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THREE LORDS OF DESTINY

I

COURAGE

THE significance of the moral life is obscured from us by the necessity of early teaching. Right conduct is so universally necessary that we cannot afford to take chances with our children, and wait for the occasions when the moral law shall flash upon them through "the east window of divine surprise." What have been the thrilling discoveries of the race must be inculcated in the form of maxims that appear commonplace. Lessons which repentant sinners have

learned through the agony of personal experience are transformed into habits of well-regulated childhood.

The consequence is that when the time arrives amid the tumult of youth, when the desire for self-expression and self-direction comes, the idea of morality is often disassociated from the idea of personal freedom. Morality is looked upon as something that fetters the will, instead of being the way by which the will achieves freedom. It is regarded as something established by traditional authority and not as a living impulse. The youth eager to try his soul knows no other way than through rebellion against the didacticism which has guided him hitherto.

Let us frankly confess that though wiser and more sympathetic education

may mitigate this struggle, yet there is a difficulty here which is fundamental. Moral teaching must of necessity be more or less commonplace in form. Conduct must be established as habit, before its reasons or its importance can be appreciated. And there must come a time when these habits are criticized and when what had been taken for granted is questioned. There is no painless way of passing from the discipline of childhood to the freedom of manhood.

But it is all the more necessary when this questioning period comes that principles of Morality and Religion should be given a fair chance for consideration. This is done only when they are placed clearly in relation to the age-long struggle for freedom.

I shall ask you, therefore, to consider the nature of the moral life, not so much as an escape from sin, as an escape from bondage. Indeed sin, from this standpoint, is itself a kind of bondage. It is the negation of what the New Testament calls the glorious liberty of the sons of God. There is a point of view from which we see all idealistic impulses as tending in one direction. Ethics, Religion, Art, Science, Politics, Industry, are all phases of one great struggle for the liberation of humanity. They are attempts to achieve that which no creature but man has dreamed of, and which every fatalistic philosophy declares to be impossible.

To the fatalist earth is a prison-house and we are captives condemned to life-imprisonment. Knowledge is only the

knowledge of the bars across our windows, and of the walls against which we beat ourselves in vain. We are creatures taken in a trap. It matters not how we conceive the trapper, whether as a personal or an impersonal power. The only thing certain is that we cannot escape. We have ideals, but between them and reality a great gulf is fixed. We love, we aspire, we feel, we suffer, but we cannot achieve. These emotions of ours have poignancy for us, but no potency to change our destiny. We are acted upon, but do not truly act. We originate nothing, we change nothing. Does the grain of dust blown about by the wind direct itself? No more do we. The raindrop falling from the cloud obeys a law which is inexorable. So do we yield to impulses which we cannot

comprehend and which we cannot resist. When we think we resist, it is only because we have yielded to another power which for the moment is stronger. We do what we must. Find at any moment the strongest forces and you can determine what we must at that moment do and be. Could a wave of the sea awake to consciousness ere it breaks, it would have as much right to assert its freedom of motion as we.

Self-consciousness to the fatalist yields no important truth. To say "I am" means little if I am an effect, but in no sense a cause of anything.

> I am but a voice,
> My life is but a life of winds and tides.
> No more than winds or tides can I avail.

Human history from this standpoint has only the same kind of interest that

pertains to a weather report. There is no room in it for praise or blame, nor for any ordered progress.

It will be noticed that the argument for fatalism is the fascinating but dangerous argument from analogy. The fatalist deals constantly with metaphors. He talks about winds and tides, about grains of dust and fading flowers and wind-swept clouds. All nature furnishes resemblances to the life of man. It is easy to assume identity. As the tree falls, so it lies. The fallen tree cannot, by any effort of its own, raise itself. In the life of plants and animals we discern continuous change, but what creature is able to direct the course of its own evolution? There is nothing that corresponds to effective choice. The machine moves, but not by its own will. One

part depends upon another part. The machinery does not repent, nor invent new methods, nor does it discover a new object for itself. What is our brain but a more complicated and delicate machine? Can it transcend in any way the limitations of mechanism?

At some time or another every one must face the fatalistic conception of life and hear the old refrain — Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. But it makes a great difference whether we recognize this as a kind of thought from which mankind has been slowly emerging, or as the sad, inevitable conclusion toward which all severe thinking tends.

As I have said, the necessary process of education tends here to confuse us. We begin to live and act where our fathers left off. We take for granted what they

discovered. Then, when we begin to think for ourselves, we retrace their course, and rediscover the wilderness from which they extricated themselves. We Occidentals and Christians have been taught in childhood to take for granted the value of moral effort. We have been subjected to discipline and have unconsciously enjoyed its fruits. Our wills have been stimulated and encouraged. We have been treated as responsible beings, and told that we are the makers of our own fortunes.

Until we began to think for ourselves it never occurred to us that there was anything remarkable in such teachings. They seemed like self-evident truths. But when these ancestral beliefs are challenged, we are at a loss to give any answer for the faith that is not so much

in us as imposed upon us. When we come upon some book which tells of the futility of effort in a world of natural law, it seems as if we had come upon a new discovery. Now we have reached that maturity of thought which brings disillusion. The intellect is emancipated from its own foolish preconceptions. In the clear cold light of reason the prisoner sees the hard, unyielding walls that shut him in.

It is here that the history of human development is helpful. It at least makes clear the direction in which the race has been moving. The fatalistic doctrine of the futility of human effort is not a new discovery reserved for clever young people of our day when they begin to philosophize. It is the most primitive form of thought, based upon what

is most obvious in human conditions. It is a part of the Natural Theology which Caliban on his island would evolve, when he tried to explain himself and it.

Of course man seems to be the helpless creature of circumstances which are beyond his own control. All circumstances are beyond his control. That seems evident enough at the first comprehensive glance at his environment. Every glimpse which we have of the working of the primitive mind reveals the mingling of fear and apathy. They both arose from the same cause. Fatalism was not a mere theory but a practical principle. The evils that were vaguely seen were not to be averted by any intelligent and sustained effort. They were not within the realm of hu-

man responsibility. They came, and their coming could not be prevented. At first there was the terrified shrinking and then the terrified submission. Caliban fears Setebos who tortures him, but above him is the still more formidable "quiet" that shall "catch and conquer Setebos." Above the passions of angry men and angry Gods is the impassive Fate, against which there is no contending.

The great significance of human history is that men have been slowly emerging from this fatalistic habit of mind. The doctrine of the futility of effort, once universal, has not prevented effort being made. And that portion of mankind which has made the most determined and continuous effort has come to believe in itself, and to claim the lordship of the earth. Out of the accu-

mulation of human endeavors there has grown a great human faith, which characterizes the progressive portion of the race. It is the faith which we have inherited and whose significance we should seek to understand.

Milton described the intellectual quest of his day as the attempt "to assert eternal Providence and justify the ways of God to man." But there is another task — or perhaps another way of considering the same task — to vindicate the course of human history and to justify the ways of man unto himself. It is to this aspect of the high argument that our age particularly addresses itself.

Are human ideals mere illusions, and are the efforts to attain them of any significance? Is personal responsibility a tremendous fact or a morbid fancy? Are

we partners in a work of creation, or are we accidental results, chance products of the play of blind forces? What should be our attitude toward the world? Should it be that of those who feel themselves to be slaves, or that of those who, however weak at the present, are struggling for the mastery?

We are not dealing with a metaphysical theory, but are choosing a way of life. What is the wise behavior for us in a world such as this? Shall we take the world at its face value and yield ourselves to its strongest forces, without further question? Is the highest wisdom the wisdom of submission to obvious facts? Shall we be content to move in the line of least resistance, without troubling ourselves to ask whither we are being borne? To live thus would

seem to be to live in accordance with nature. It would be to follow the analogy of other created things. We are copying the behavior of our Brother Fire and our Sister Water. The fire burns, the water flows, because they must and not because they will.

Endless have been the experiments in this direction. Sages and saints meditating upon the vanity of effort have sought to return to calm acquiescence in the order of nature. They have tried to still desire, to banish ambition, and to attain to a state in which they would have no will of their own. They would be passive in the hands of the master of their fate. "Doth the clay say to the potter, 'Why hast thou made me thus?'" Why should the human clay cherish the ambition to remold itself?

But here appears one of the ironies of life. To attain to this effortless calm demands a supreme effort of the will. To return to nature demands an arduous process of reëducation. Nature must first be idealized before we can realize it. We must painfully unlearn what had been natural to us. How painful and continuous is the discipline through which Oriental mystics seek to divest themselves of the sense of free agency. They have to keep their minds upon the high task of not thinking. Any lapse of attention would plunge them into the abyss of ordinary human feeling. St. Simeon Stylites stood upon his pillar to show that he had no will of his own. What an example of pure willfulness it was!

As a matter of fact, it is as difficult to divest one's self of human attributes, as

it is to develop these attributes into higher forms. The higher can only imperfectly mimic the lower. And the mimicking is not worth the pains. A person cannot act precisely as if he were a thing. There is something that struggles and resists, be it ever so feebly.

Even when we conceive of the universe and of ourselves as bound by inexorable necessity, we yet dream of freedom. We dream of a life of our own choosing where we walk confidently on the open road. The free wind blows upon us, we meet companions and talk together. And when the evening comes, we lie down to rest, conscious of achievement. We have accomplished something, we are further on toward the goal we have freely chosen.

And in our dreams we are creators.

We build cities and temples, we carve marble, we paint pictures, all in obedience to an inner impulse. And all is more beautiful than the material out of which it is made.

As long as we are content to enjoy the dream as a dream, we are still in bondage. So the slave dreams, and awakes to his misery. We are free only in proportion as we are able to transform our dreams into realities — in other words to realize our ideals.

What is the first decisive step in the direction of spiritual freedom? What new power is developed in us that lifts us out of the apathy and fear of fatalism?

When the Christian is asked the question, he answers, "It is Faith. It is this that overcomes the world, and makes us free. Is it not written 'The just shall

live by faith'?" And if the Christian is speaking out of personal experience of a new kind of life, and so entering into the spirit of the New Testament, he is uttering a deep truth. But if he is merely repeating by rote a lesson which he has been taught by others, he is but darkening counsel by words. For the chances are that he is confused by the ambiguity in the word Faith. Faith may be conceived of as a kind of courage or as a kind of knowledge.

In the great texts of the New Testament in its praise, it is clearly conceived of as a kind of courage. It is that which conquers the fear of the darkness. It deals boldly and aggressively with the uncertain. It lays hold of what is confessedly unseen. By faith Abraham went out from his father's house, not know-

ing whither he went. By faith Moses preferred the sorrowful uncertainties of the people of God to the obvious comforts and safety of the Egyptian Court. By faith men chose to live the life of pilgrims and strangers because they sought a better country than they had known. Obeying this inner impulse they went through fire and flood and put to flight the armies of aliens.

This is evidently not knowledge, but an ability to act in advance of knowledge. It is the willingness to take huge risks. The men who put to flight the army of aliens were men who did not flee before the aliens. It was not the foreseen victory but the invincible courage that was praised. Faith is an act of sublime audacity on the part of a being who matches himself against powers that threaten to

overwhelm him. It is that which induces a man to try hazardous experiments in righteousness.

But the great word may, and often does, fall into a weaker use. It comes to signify not the power which dares, but the smug assurance of one who in advance of the conflict has information of the result. The battle is only theatrical, the victory is predetermined, and all the means leading to it are clearly to be seen. Be not afraid, because there is nothing to be afraid of.

Now that definite knowledge that there is nothing to be afraid of may be very comforting, but it is not courage. It is rather the elimination of all that makes courage necessary. If the soldier knew beforehand that no bullet could harm him, he would face the enemy

with as much unconcern as at the carnival he would face a shower of confetti. All that is characteristic in the soldier's sense of duty disappears.

To vast numbers of people the word faith means advance knowledge, supernaturally communicated. To those who feel that they have attained it, fear disappears from its accustomed haunts. But it still prowls around in the outskirts of consciousness, in the places that yet remain dark. It is apt to take a new form. What if the faith itself should waver? Or what if the faith one holds should prove not to be the true faith?

The identification of religious faith with advance knowledge has another consequence. It prevents multitudes of persons from entering joyously and confidently into the religious life. They

are waiting for a miracle that does not happen. They long to believe, but they cannot. No mysterious light flashes upon the future. They are surrounded by uncertainties. Were God revealed to them by unmistakable signs, they would gladly worship him. Were indubitable truth to be made manifest, they would accept it. Were a voice to proclaim Duty unmistakably, they would instantly give themselves to its service. But nothing happens as they had been led to expect. And so they plod on, as best they may, upon the common way.

To such it may be a help to lay aside for the time the great word which has a double meaning, and put the emphasis upon the word whose meaning is unmistakable — Courage.

When we appeal to courage we are

not dependent on any contingency of knowledge. We do not state an opinion. We do not prophesy the event. We do not flatter, we do not make promises, we do not argue. We only awaken a power —it is the power to endure and to dare. What that power shall accomplish, how far it shall go, we know not. It is enough for the moment that it responds to the call. Before the formal answer to the creed, "I believe," comes the instinctive answer to the need — "I dare."

Religion and Morality are in their beginnings acts of pure courage. They are the bold assertion of a creature who is determined to become what he is well aware that he is not. We talk of "timid piety." But that is only an afterthought. It is the attitude of one who is afraid

that he may lose a treasure which he once possessed. It is like the young man who went away very sorrowful because he had great possessions, which he was unwilling to put in jeopardy. But piety in the making is not timid but bold with the audacity of conscious poverty under the spur of necessity. It is not a treasure. It is a treasure-seeker, with nothing to lose and all to gain.

Here we see the explanation of that which often seems paradoxical in religious experience. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," they are the most high-spirited in the quest for perfection, and go furthest. The consciousness of their utter poverty sets them free from prudential considerations which hold others back. Those who are passing through a great spiritual crisis are apt to speak

scornfully of what they call "mere morality."

The morality which they scorn is that which is conventional. It now seems of little worth, compared with what they would obtain. Theirs is the spirit of the leader of a forlorn hope, who flings away all that he has on a glorious venture.

The prophet says of the righteous servant of Jehovah, "He was numbered among the transgressors." All that is inspiring in the history of mankind has to do with these glorious transgressors, who were willing to defy power that seemed irresistible.

The arguments of tyrants have always been simple. "Remain where we have placed you, and we shall protect you. Under our watchful guardianship you

shall be safe. Resist and you shall suffer, and as the last resort we may kill you."

The slave submits, content with ignoble safety. When the impulse of freedom comes, there is defiance. "I will follow what seems to me the better course, come what may."

The whole significance of the choice lies in the fact that the man who makes it does not know what may come. The issue of the strife is uncertain, but nevertheless he enters upon it gladly. When word came to Nehemiah that his enemies were about to attack him and he was urged to flee into the temple, he answered: "Should such a man as I flee? And who is there that being as I am would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

Here the outward fact was confronted with the inner fact. The outer reality was Danger, the inner was Courage. They confronted one another, and the inner reality stood firm.

When such a conflict takes place, how shall the victory be determined? In this case Nehemiah stood his ground and his enemies did not destroy him. We say that he triumphed through his act of courage. But suppose they had come upon him and killed him at his post of duty. Still the judgment of mankind would crown him victor. Such a man as he was in his life, such he was in death. In his steadfastness he had gained the undefiled rewards. True to himself he had not yielded to a threat.

Entering as we do into the heritage of generations of valiant souls, we do not

realize that everything which we call a virtue was at one time a perilous adventure in righteousness, and that our commonest duties were once acts prohibited, which only the boldest spirits dared attempt. Our simplest faith belongs to the way men called heresy.

One may enter a modern church and see in it but an institution devoted to the defence of the established order. The faces of the worshipers indicate prosperity rather than eager aspiration. Then come the thrilling words of the *Te Deum:*

"The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee.

"The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee.

"The noble army of martyrs praise thee."

Amid the respectabilities and the orthodoxies and the moral mediocrities, to which the church-goers had been accustomed, there come the brave beginners, non-conformists all. They were men who would not be conformed to the world, even to the religious world of their time. They attempted to transform it, by the renewing of their minds.

The Apostles were men who chose the hard task instead of the easy one. They left friends and comrades to carry a message to men who were not willing to receive it. The Prophets were men with an unusual zeal for righteousness. They were not satisfied with the standards of their community. Lonely and friendless, they yet kept their chosen path unfalteringly. We hear from the

prophet the outcry of pain, but it is a pain that never swerves him from his course. "Woe is me for my hurt, for it is grievous. But I said, truly this is grief, and I must bear it." And the Martyrs, who were they? — Literally witnesses, men, with an unusual sense of veracity. No threat or torture could induce them to swerve in their testimony. They could die, but they could not deny the truth they saw.

Truly a glorious company! a goodly fellowship! a noble army!

We do not understand the language of religion if we interpret it by the spirit of those who merely acquiesce in dogmas which have been presented to them. We must go directly to the men who have dared — the prophets, apostles and mar-

tyrs of every age. Let us try to understand their attitude.

Let us define the great words of religion in terms of pure courage.

Repentance. This is a declaration of independence, an act of defiance. A man looks upon his past acts and on his present condition and sees them to be full of sin and shame. He loathes them, but he at first sees no way of escape from them. Habit holds him. Reason seems to say that it is inevitable that he should remain as he is. He has made his bed, he must lie upon it. He cannot escape from the consequences of his own deeds. They are his destiny.

Then comes a sudden access of courage. He no longer seeks to escape. The consequences of his deeds remain and must meet him again. So be it. But

when they meet him again they shall not find in him a cowering slave. He will confront them like a man. It is not the circumstances that have changed, but he has changed. He will live, not as if the things he had done had never happened. They have happened. Now they are a part of the evil that is to be overcome. He no longer apologizes, or excuses. He has given up his old self and is deliberately building up a new character.

Can he do it? The wise and prudent say, No. He is battling against fate. He is defying the laws of nature, of his own nature. Even the prophet of righteousness is, at times, skeptical as to the result. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to

do evil." Against the influence of heredity and habit who can contend?

But the contest goes on. It is the thrilling story of brave souls that have grappled with the evil in their own natures, and begun life anew.

Forgiveness. This is rebellion against the tyranny of our own prejudices. We had sat in judgment upon others. We had identified the sinner with his sin. Our idea of rectitude had hardened into fixed forms. Certain persons had become to us symbols of unrighteousness. To hate them was the outward and visible sign of our inner grace. The moral law had itself become fatalistic. Its very existence seemed to depend upon the invariable relation between sin and its penalties. To pardon was to be disloyal to its stern requirements.

Then comes the revolutionary idea of forgiveness. To a person of ethical temper and training it demands the highest kind of courage. "Who art thou that forgivest sins ?"

Shelley makes the Furies looking down on the ineffective efforts of well-meaning people cry tauntingly, —

> They dare not devise good for man's estate
> And yet they know that they do not dare.

What they do not dare do is fully to trust their fellow-men. The memory of old sins prevents confidence in new endeavors.

But now and then there comes one who has the courage of forgiveness. His conception of the moral law is purged of fatalism. It is the perfect law of liberty. It means the call to every one

to do the very best he can, under the circumstances in which he finds himself. All men are equal under this law. He is careless of conventional distinctions between saints and sinners. The past is seen to be past, and he sees his fellow-men, acting under the stress of present necessities. His judgments are not retrospective, but have to do with living issues. To him repentant sinners come, sure that he will see them not as they were but as they are. He judges not after appearance but judges righteous judgments. The appearances are the survivals of the past; but he is quick to discern the latent good that doth not yet appear.

He only has achieved freedom who dares to challenge the conventional judgments. He dares conceive of new

forms of righteousness, a righteousness that "exceeds the righteousness of scribes and pharisees." He is a bold explorer who discovers virtues in unexpected places. His conscience moves as freely among the acts and motives of men, as the imagination of the artist moves among the elements of beauty. And like the imagination of the artist it is selective and creative. Out of imperfect human nature it selects what is most precious and creates new forms of spiritual excellence.

Renunciation. All philosophies and religions have emphasized renunciation. But it makes a great difference whether the word is interpreted as an act of spiritual courage or as a yielding to imperious necessity. It is to be feared that when we speak of self-denial or

self-sacrifice the fatalistic feeling is suggested to most minds. In this world, it is thought, the best is beyond our reach, we must learn to give up the vain desire for it and to content ourselves with the second best. But this is to beg the whole question. The assertion of those who live the life of the spirit is that the life they have chosen is in reality the higher life. It is the kind of life that in itself yields the most lasting satisfactions. The choice is a real one only when this is believed. When St. Francis talked with Brother Leo about perfect bliss, he was not counseling resignation, he was arousing spiritual ambition. To him the life of lowly service was enticing. He would have his disciple feel its charm. There have always been persons who really believed in the Beatitudes. They

have preferred to be blessed rather than to be comfortable. Even the most bigoted man of the world must admit that there are persons who do not share his aims. These headstrong people must be allowed to go on their own way. If they give up what to him is of most value, he should do them the credit to believe that it is in exchange for something they care for more. When they voluntarily lose the whole world, it is because they put an extraordinary value upon their own souls.

It is not the fact of giving up something that is important. The important thing is the reason. There are strategical moves to be considered.

The commander of a fortress may evacuate it in the face of the enemy. He is no longer able to maintain himself

in it, and he retires before overwhelming force. He gives up something under compulsion. But on the other hand he may march out of the fortress, in order to meet the enemy. He leaves the security of the walls in order to force an engagement. This movement is not compelled by fear, but impelled by courage. He leaves the strong position, because he trusts in the strength of his own army.

In war two generals of equal intellectual ability and equally versed in military science may confront each other. In only one respect do they differ, in the amount and quality of their courage. This temperamental difference is decisive. It influences their strategy and determines their action at every point. All the intellectual processes are influ-

enced by the ultimate object. One commander uses all his skill to save himself and his army. He is full of expedients by which to extricate himself from places of difficulty and danger. To the other, himself and his army are only instruments to be used for a purpose. He is not thinking about them but about what he can do with them. He is ever seeking the decisive moment when everything is to be risked in one mighty effort.

The same difference exists among men of religion. One man conceives of religion as the higher prudence. All its problems are prudential. How may I with the least waste of time in individual thinking, and the least spiritual anxiety, attain to a comfortable certainty? How may I escape from the conse-

quences of my own mistakes and sins? How may I extricate myself from complex social relationships which disturb my peace of mind? How shall I enjoy the rewards of righteousness without being burdened by its anxieties? How can I be assured that my good deeds shall be rewarded and my prayers answered according to my notion of what is fitting?

It will be noticed that all these are of the nature of demands upon a power outside of us, but that there is no demand upon a power working in us and through us. They are the problems of religion that might be formulated by sluggards and cowards.

Do not expect when you turn to the glorious company of Apostles, the goodly fellowship of Prophets, and the

noble army of Martyrs, to find the solution of such problems. The problems are not even propounded. "The beggar self forgets to ask."

Sorrow, misunderstanding, uncertainty, death, these are not explained away. They are unescapable realities in the world we live in. But they are not the supreme realities. They are not our masters and shall not be allowed to keep us from our chosen way. We will not yield to our inferiors. The spiritual nature of man asserts itself. And in that self-assertion is freedom.

Worship. The nature of worship is obscured by our familiarity with its forms. In its essence it is an act of spiritual daring. It is an attitude of the soul toward that which is perfect, but it differs from the attitude of artistic

appreciation, or even of moral approbation. It is the recognition of a perfection that is so far above that it seems to belong to another world. But into that other world the worshiper ventures.

Isaiah gives us a picture of worship in his vision which came "in the year that King Uzziah died." He saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the heaven." He heard the voices that cried one to another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." At first the vision of a perfection he could not attain to overwhelmed him and he cried, "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Then a coal from the altar touched his lips,

and there came the sudden access of spiritual courage. He forgot the distance between himself and the splendor that enthralled him. The call to high service was accepted before he had time to assure himself of his fitness. "Here am I, send me."

Worship comes before knowledge and before fitness. They do not know the working of the human soul who think of adoration as the posture only of saints. The beatific vision comes to multitudes yet in their sins. They reverence that which they do not comprehend. And that life is meager indeed which does not recognize, at least in moments, the glory touching the far horizons. By-and-by it may become the light of common day. Now it is something to be wondered at.

To one who has felt himself to be a prisoner of Fate the liberating moment comes, when he turns from the uncertainties of the outward world to something which he discovers within himself. He feels a spiritual impulse and dares to trust it. In that new-born confidence there is disenthrallment. He has seen a great light; he resolves to follow it. Whither it will lead him he, as yet, knows not. He will take the risks. In that choice is his first experience of freedom.

II

SKILL

We have considered the significance of courage in the human struggle for freedom. The emergence of the hero marks the first victory over a gloomy fatalism. The hero declares no doctrine about the Universe, but he asserts himself. What I am, I am. What may happen to him is a matter which for the moment may be treated as irrelevant. Let worst come to worst, he will be loyal to his own vision of the best.

The charm of all hero stories is that we are not concerned as to how they come out. Character is seen to be intrinsically more important than circumstance. Even the tragedy "comes out

well," if the heroic spirit is manifest unto the end. Samson lies buried under the ruins of the temple he has thrown down. But "Samson hath quit himself like Samson." That is enough.

Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.

The characteristic thing about courage is that it is complete in itself, and is dependent on no circumstance whatever. The battlefield is in the man's own nature. When he has overcome fear, the victory is won. He has gained the undefiled rewards.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite,
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night,
To defy Power which seems omnipotent

To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates,
. . . . . .

This like thy glory Titan is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory.

Not only does the courageous spirit determine its own course without regard to the threats of opposing power, but it chooses its own course of conduct without waiting for sympathy. Matthew Arnold, in a little poem called "Religious Isolation," compares those who do not trust their spiritual intuitions until they have been confirmed by arguments drawn from Nature to children who are "too fearful or too fond to play alone." We must learn to walk without external supports.

What though the holy secret, which moulds thee,
Moulds not the solid earth? though never winds
Have whisper'd it to the complaining sea,

Nature's great law, and law of all men's minds?
To its own impulse every creature stirs;
Live by thy light, and earth will live by hers!

This sense of isolation is necessary to one who would know the nature of goodness. The biologist in the laboratory isolates the germ which he would study. He must see it as it is, without confusing it with anything else. Only thus can he determine whether its behavior is harmful or beneficent. So the things of the spirit must be distinguished from their material environment. They must be "spiritually discerned." As parts of the interior life they must be differentiated from every influence external to themselves.

My mind to me a kingdom is.

This kingdom must preserve its inde-

pendence. Its borders must be jealously defended against all invasion.

When we use the term disinterested virtue, we simply mean that we are talking about virtue, and not about something else which may easily be mistaken for it. We are fixing our minds upon a motive for conduct. The virtuous motive is something very different from the hope of reward or the fear of punishment. We are anxious to make clear what that motive precisely is. This is done when the choice brings pain rather than pleasure. This choice demands pure courage.

But though Courage is the first great liberator from fatalistic slavery, it is not the only one. When the choice of ideal good has been bravely made, another step must be taken. The emancipated

soul is not content simply to fight its old battles over again. It would use its independence in seeking larger fields of service. It is not enough to *be* good, it would *do* good. After the realization of moral freedom comes the desire for efficiency.

Let us consider the next phase of the struggle against Fatalism. It involves a new outlook upon the world, and a new method, Courage, wins the sense of personal independence. The soul is freed from the inhibitions of fear. It dares to obey its own higher impulses. It no longer consents to be molded by its environment. But a new liberator appears — it is Skill. Skill accomplishes what Courage only proposes. It creates a new environment. It is the mind

working upon the materials provided for it in the actual world. As men learn to work skillfully, they come to have an altogether different mental attitude. They literally "work out their own salvation" from many evils which before had seemed irremediable.

Dean Stanley in a vivid chapter in his book on Christian Institutions tells of the origin of the Litany. It came at the time when the Roman Empire was tottering to its fall. In France there had been terrific social convulsions and with them a succession of droughts, pestilences, and earthquakes. Horror was piled on horror. "On one of these occasions, when the people had been hoping that with the Easter festival some respite would come, a sudden earthquake shook the

Church at Vienne on the Rhone. It was on Easter eve; the congregation rushed out; the bishop of the city was left alone before the altar. On that terrible night he formed the resolution of inventing a new form, as he hoped, of drawing down the mercy of God." Out of the conscious helplessness before the awful powers of Nature, came the Litany, with its prayers for help against "the lightning and tempest," the "plague, pestilence and famine," the "battle and murder and sudden death."

Famine, pestilence, lightning and tempest, battle and murder and sudden death still exist. Indeed, the catalogue of human ills has been lengthened owing to increasing sensitiveness and quickened sympathy. But the attitude

of the modern man is different from that of the excited multitudes of mediæval peasants who followed each other over hill and valley, crying, "Lord, have mercy upon us."

Instead of the penitential processions you find men armed with instruments of precision studying the evils that are presented as so many problems to be solved.

We enter the laboratory and watch the careful processes by which the pestilence is robbed of its terrors. It is no longer the "pestilence that walketh in darkness." A searching light has been thrown upon it. The death-dealer is revealed as itself a form of life. It is a specific germ whose life-history can be determined, and habits known. The cool students learn how it is produced, how

it thrives, on what food it is dependent, and how it reproduces itself. Its life-history once known, plans are made for its control or its destruction. All this is unemotional. There is no guess-work about it. Each process is carefully tested. Vague fears are not allowed to disturb the impartial poise of the investigator.

Famine is no longer personified. It is not a meager ghost that clutches its victims. It is an economic blunder, that indicates a low stage of civilization. It is an indication of unjustifiable waste. Go to any of our great universities, and you will see why it is that life has been divested of one of its terrors. The human intellect is not merely considering its own needs, but it is providing also for the needs of the body. Chemists, biolo-

gists, physiologists, engineers, political economists, are collaborating in one great utilitarian work. They are concerned with the food-supply. They are carefully working out the problems of its production and distribution. This knowledge once obtained, great armies of teachers are engaged to make it available to the people.

The earthquake and tempest have not been eliminated. But even in the presence of their terrible destruction, we are aware that the attitude of the modern man is different from that of his predecessors. In San Francisco the earthquake was looked upon as an incident that must be taken into account by future city-builders. It revealed weak points in civic engineering. Architects must study how to make their buildings

secure against such tremors of the earth as may come at long intervals.

In regard to war, a calamity of our own making, the attitude of our age is, curiously enough, more fatalistic than in regard to the destructive outbursts of Nature's forces. But even here intellectual curiosity is making itself felt. In the Peace Congresses there is apt to be less appeal to vague humanitarian sentiment, and more use of cool reason. Let us investigate the real causes of war. Let us isolate the bacillus of militarism, and see if it is really immortal as so many worldly-wise people imagine. Cool, businesslike discussions are going on as to ways and means for lessening the enormous waste of life and treasure that has hitherto been supposed to be unavoidable. This indicates that the

peacemaker is learning to go about his work in a matter-of-fact way. He is considering not only the value of his product, but the most economical way of producing it. He is looking for results.

What then becomes of the Litany with its "Good Lord, deliver us"? When science and skill are enlisted in the work of deliverance from earthly evils, does religion cease to be a necessity? As men become self-reliant, do the old pieties, which once were so beautiful, vanish?

There are those who thus interpret the intellectual development of humanity. To them, every increase in skill is a step away from religion, and from the old courageous faith of prophets and saints. It is even a step away from confidence in the moral law. Is not that also

an object of intellectual curiosity, rather than of devout feeling?

In such an interpretation it seems to me that they mistake the whole significance of skill. Skill does not have to do with the ends but with the means. The difference between the skilled and the unskilled laborer lies not in the thing they are trying to do, but in their relative ability to do it. A certain difficult piece of work is proposed to them both. They are equally well-meaning and clear in their understanding of the object of their endeavor. But one man comes to the difficulty and is stopped by it. It is an absolute veto to his endeavor. He can go no further. The other man comes to the same difficulty, and his intelligence and training enable him quickly to overcome it. It is to him

only an incident in his day's work. Skill is not a substitute for an ideal; it is only the way by which an ideal may be realized.

What the increase of skill really does is to widen the sphere of moral freedom, so that it takes in not merely thought and feeling, but also effective action. It makes it possible for the good cause to succeed.

The disappointment which comes in reading the history of many heroic souls is not because they did not receive material rewards, — these they did not seek, but because they did not accomplish the thing nearest their hearts. There is a baffled feeling as of one vainly fighting against remorseless Fate, when the most earnest effort fails to bring the result which is sought.

The law-giver wills justice. He lives to see the instruments of justice perverted to the uses of civil tyranny. The prophet calls people to the worship of Divine righteousness, and then, looking upon the externalization of religion cries, "Israel hath forgotten God and buildeth temples." The philanthropist wills mercy, and finds the institutions of charity becoming hateful because of the cold-heartedness of those who administer their resources. The revolutionist fares no better. He wills liberty, but how to realize it in the period of revolution he knows not. The great words he utters return to him in mocking echoes.

The nations thronged around, and cried aloud
As with one voice, Truth, liberty and love!
Suddenly confusion fell from heaven

Among them; there was strife, deceit and fear;
Tyrants rushed in and did divide the spoil.
This was the shadow of the truth I saw.

The ancient explanation of such sorrowful disappointments was altogether fatalistic. The Hebrew sage saw this as the vanity under the sun. "All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and to the clean and to the unclean, to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not, as to the good so to the sinner." So far as he himself was concerned, he would make the brave decision. He would "fear God and keep his commandments, this is the whole duty of man." But it was a duty done without hope of its accomplishing anything.

The Stoics' realm of moral freedom was

equally limited. They divided all things into two great categories,—the things which are within our power, and those which lie outside. In regard to the first category we must be solicitous. Like good soldiers we must guard all that is left in our custody. But toward the rest we must cultivate an austere indifference. They are to be treated as the soldier treats the cold and the heat. They are incidents to be disregarded. The greater part of actual existence fell within the second category.

And Christian ethics made the same distinction. "Let every man bear his own burden," is one text. "Cast thy burden on the Lord," is another. They are not really contradictory because they refer to two different kinds of bur-

dens—those which we can bear and those whose nature is such that we cannot bear them. There are some things for which we are responsible, for they are within our power. These things we must assume—they belong to us. There are other things which do not come by our will, and cannot be changed by our effort; these things need not trouble us. It is enough for us to leave them in God's hands.

The distinction is founded on good sense, and must always remain. But there has been a constant change in the number of things included in the two divisions. With the growth of knowledge and with the increase in skill, one event after another has been taken out of the category of the morally indifferent and placed within the realm of

human responsibility. In other words, the world is being gradually moralized. What was once attributed to time and chance, is now seen to be within the control of the enlightened will.

Take that lamentation of Ecclesiastes: "I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill, but time and chance happen to them all."

That was the observation of a man who saw things as they were in his own land and time. It is such an observation as a philosopher in Mexico or Turkey or Persia might make at the present time. Personal merit has nothing to do with success in life. The wisest and best are the victims. Selfish and cruel

men have the advantage in the struggle for existence. It is an observation which is measurably true in every community. But the ancient observer makes of it a wide generalization as if he were stating an unescapable law of nature. And the pessimist accepts the generalization at its face value. It is not worth while for a man to try to be wise or good or even energetic in a world like this. He cannot expect in that way to get on. His virtues and his talents only handicap him.

But read the lamentation to a modern social reformer and note his response. In the first place he inquires narrowly into the facts. To what extent, he asks, is it true that the best individuals in any particular community are crowded out, and the unfit survive and increase? In so far as it exists, this is an evil, but it

is not to be vaguely and hopelessly attributed to an unfriendly universe, but to certain definite imperfections in the social order. And it is our business to find out what these are and to find the remedy.

The gardener sees this evil under the sun, that sturdy weeds grow apace, and take the sustenance from the more delicate but more useful plants. But he does not fold his hands in fatalistic resignation. Here is a challenge to his skill. He studies the soil and the growth of the plants both evil and good. He so orders his garden that those he loves best shall thrive best. And in so doing he learns that he is not working against Nature but with her. He is doing quickly what she is doing slowly and on a vaster scale.

SKILL

In our day people are beginning to see that the old fatalistic notions which surrounded the conception of law and government are superstitious. A government does not exist for itself, still less do the people exist for it. It is as much an invention as a locomotive or sewing machine. It was constructed by human skill and it can be reconstructed by increased skill. When it does not do the work for which it was designed, the machine must be repaired, or perhaps new parts added.

If we have a state of affairs in which individual talents are repressed and ambition smothered, in which industry does not get its proper rewards, and the wise and just are at a disadvantage, then our social organization is at fault. It is time for us to see what is the matter.

We must call in the expert and follow his advice.

The very multiplicity of the devices for doing good, and the technical skill that is enlisted in the work, obscure to many minds the spiritual significance of it all. It is as if the Good Samaritan, with his big heart and his scanty equipment for service, were suddenly to be transported into a modern hospital. Of the uses of the instruments, of the necessity of the routine, or of the meaning of the terms freely used by unemotional internes and "visiting men," he would know nothing. He would not at first realize that the complex machinery had no other object than the fulfillment of his heart's desire. These were the modern improvements on his simple wine and oil.

Those who complain that in our day people are turning away from the ideal to the practical, should, before they allow themselves to become too much discouraged, define their terms; use the words as adjectives and ask, Ideal what? Practical what?

The answer is ideal *ends*, and practical *methods*. The great fact is, not that people are turning away from ideal ends, but that they are, as never before, profoundly interested in practical methods for attaining these ends. Doing justly and mercifully, walking humbly before God, are recognized as skilled occupations.

To the educated men and women of this generation, it is particularly necessary to have a clear understanding of this relation between ideal purposes

and practical methods. We can say of Beauty that it is its own excuse for being. But we cannot say the same thing of Skill. Its justification lies in its relation to its object. Skill applied to unworthy purposes only makes disaster greater and more certain. Efficiency becomes a mere fetish to those who do not ask carefully what is the purpose of the work which is efficiently done.

Thomas à Kempis prayed, "Grant me, O Lord, to know what is worth knowing and to love what is worth loving." Only out of such desire can come worthy action. The thing that is worth knowing and worth loving is also worth doing. The next question is, how to do it. This is a matter of skill.

It might be possible to make two

charts of human progress through the ages. One would indicate fervor of the spirit, the devotion to pure ideals, as manifest in feeling and word. The other would record the growth in efficiency, the extent to which moral endeavor actually modified the course of events.

The first, I imagine, would look very much like a clinical chart. There would be sudden risings and falls in temperature. In one generation there would be a great access of spiritual courage, a revival of pure religion. Then would be recorded the periods of coldness and torpor. These periods would not coincide with advance in other directions. It is in the darkest ages that the greatest heroes and saints have lived.

But the other would be like a map showing the course of some great river.

It begins in a tiny rivulet, and it increases not through any mysterious power of growth in itself, but by what it receives from its affluents. A thousand streams flow into it and add their waters to its current.

The increase of skill is cumulative. The results of the experience of one generation are handed down to the next. This increment is not dependent on states of feeling. Our desire for righteousness may be no greater than that of our barbarous progenitors, but our ability to perform is undoubtedly greater.

From this point of view the old discussion about Justification by Faith takes on a new aspect. The question was as to which was the important thing, the outer act or the inner impulse. Luther took the side of inner liberty.

"The good work does not make the good man," he said, "the good man does the good work."

The modern reformer would say: We must first determine accurately what we mean by a good man and what we mean by a good work. Each must be judged according to its own nature. A man's goodness must be judged by his motive, and a work must be judged by its results. When such tests are applied, it appears that many so-called "good works" are not good at all. They are either futile or pernicious. No amount of such works can make a man better. On the other hand, whether a good man does good works depends upon whether he has learned how to do them. He will certainly desire to do good, but whether he succeeds is an-

other matter. His intentions may be right and his actions may bring calamities. The blunders of the good are sometimes as disastrous as the crimes of the wicked.

A clear comprehension of the effect which advancing knowledge and increasing skill have on moral judgments would save us from many fruitless discussions. It would enable us to see the real point of agreement between the ethical idealist and the well-intentioned "practical" man who often misunderstands and resists him.

In every generation there is a controversy going on between the radical reformers and the conservatives. Each accuses the other of moral obliquity. The reformer fixes his mind upon a

specific evil which has become a part of the social system. He declares it to be cruel and unjust. He pictures the suffering that is entailed to the innocent. Let us do away with this, he says, at any cost. And so by every method of agitation he seeks to arouse the social conscience, and unite all good people in behalf of his cause.

Great is his disappointment and indignation when he finds that his appeal falls on indifferent or even hostile ears. His measures for the alleviation of human misery meet not only with the opposition of selfish interests but with the disapproval of those whose personal characters are above suspicion. Their attitude is disconcerting because they refuse to face fairly the specific question which he raises. They are in real-

ity fatalists so far as this matter is concerned. "Yes," they say, "we admit that many things may be going on which are unpleasant to contemplate. Not only is such investigation as you undertake unpleasant but it is also unprofitable. There are doubtless evils here, but they are evils incidental to the great and good work in which society is engaged. On the whole we are doing very well, and the good work should not be disturbed. We cannot expect perfection in a world like this. We must all learn to endure hardness and become good soldiers. When we are sure that a great constructive process is going on, we must patiently go on with it. We must not allow ourselves to be disturbed by destructive criticism. We would not, of course, do

evil that good may come. But when we see a solid good, we must endure the evils which accompany it, and which we see to be inevitable."

This is the answer which in the first half of the last century was given to the reformers who, in England, investigated the work of women in the mines. "Yes, it is doubtless very distressing that women and girls are employed as beasts of burden, that they work in underground passages, often on their hands and knees, drawing loads of coal. It is a pity that they have such long hours, and that their scanty wages will not allow of nourishing food. It is a pity too that these women should by the very nature of their calling, be prevented from living a respectable life. But this is one of the sacrifices demanded by civiliza-

tion. It is necessary that we should have cheap fuel, and this is the only way that we can have it."

It is the answer which the educational reformer has always received. "Yes; the sensitive child has a hard time of it. He is bullied by his masters and by his companions. His health sometimes suffers from long hours and bad air. He is driven, instead of gently led, in the paths of learning. Tasks are given him unsuited to his years. At the time he hates the school and all its ways, but after a while he will see that all has been for the best. He will forget the injustices of which he has been the victim. It is all involved in the necessarily painful process of education. Of course some cannot stand it. Every system has its failures. But the survivors agree to praise

the discipline they have undergone. It is that which has made them what they are. Certainly that is a sufficient justification for it in their eyes."

Suppose we were to interview a hundred "successful" men as to the means by which they got their living. We should find a substantial agreement among them. They would say, "We do not claim that the means by which we have succeeded have been ideally perfect, and the conditions have not been those we should have chosen. But we are practical men and must take the world as we find it and do the best we can. Now and then there have been things that involved hardship to our competitors. We had to shut our eyes to these things and go on. If we have been less generous and kindly in our

dealings than we should have desired, it is because it was necessary. We must get our living, you know."

This is that form of fatalism which is called "economic determinism." It is that which makes every man an apologist for that by which he lives. But it is not limited by purely economic necessity. Man does not live by bread alone. In the pursuit of the ideals of the higher life he also feels the pressure of harsh necessities.

The history of human progress is full of cruelty. Religious persecution was justified and practiced by many who were kind-hearted. Persecution was looked upon as a practical necessity, if the business of religious propagandism was to be carried on upon a large scale. Moral suasion was doubtless the ideal

thing, but it was very slow and uncertain in its working. To get results one must sometimes harden one's heart and use physical force.

We have believers in modern civilization who are equally ruthless in their methods of advancing it. Backward peoples must, they say, be exterminated in order that the better stock may have a chance to increase. The incidental pain must be endured for the sake of the greater good. In all this we are imitating the methods of nature. We are deliberately acting as instruments of Manifest Destiny. In all such discussions we have the contrast between the idealist appealing to sentiment, and the practical man insisting on the consideration of the necessities of the case. And so long as the discussion takes this form,

the practical man has the advantage. He is standing firmly for facts as he sees them, and is working as best he can for the modest possibilities within his reach. I am not sure but that morally he has the advantage. He is loyal to certain great achievements of the race. They form a body of tested good. He is not willing to give them up for what may be only a dream of perfection. The worst government is better than no government at all. The most cruel industrial system does keep the majority of people from starving. The pedant with his rod teaches the boy something which he could not have learned by himself. Only a liberal bigot will deny that there have been times when religious bigotry was useful.

But when the idealistic reformer has

added to his spiritual courage the necessary skill, the tables are turned. He ceases to be a mere agitator and begins to speak as an expert. All that the honest conservative claims he frankly admits. All that the conservative loves, he loves also, and values highly. There is to be no wanton destruction, no waste of good material. In regard to ultimate ends there is also a good understanding. The wisdom of the past is not to be ignored.

I agree, says the expert, that we must be severely practical. We must not waste our time over barren idealities. Our admiration is for the "men who do things." Let us make a list of the things you want to do, and then consider the best possible means of doing them. When such a list is made, it appears,

my dear sir, that there is a great deal of waste in the methods you have employed. With the best intentions in the world, you have not been "getting results." You have been using obsolete machinery, and employing unskilled workmen. Let us see how all this may be changed to your advantage. A great many things can be done which you declare to be impossible. But of course you need to learn how!

The increase of skill means an increase of responsibility. That which makes life in these days so difficult is that so many things which once were deemed impossible are attempted. There has come the sudden realization that we can do more than in our ignorance we thought we could. The

conscience finds its jurisdiction enlarged, and is overwhelmed with new business. The old commandments become more formidable. We have heard it said by them of old time, "Thou shalt not kill." But we did not dream of our own destructive powers. We should not poison our neighbor's well. We are just beginning to realize that unwittingly we had been poisoning the air he breathed. To avoid this crime we have to rebuild our cities. More and more the death-list is scrutinized and accidents once described as "acts of God" are seen to be the acts of men. The list of avoidable disasters and preventable diseases grows rapidly. The lives lost upon our railroads, in factories, in mines, in unsanitary homes, are lives for which somebody must be held re-

sponsible. Such losses are not inevitable.

"Thou shalt not steal" was a commandment which once brought little compunction to respectable members of society. But that was in pre-scientific days. To-day only the very stupid can feel free from any sense of guilt. We not only see the disinherited but we ask, how they came to be disinherited. Who took away the opportunities that should have been theirs? Who robbed them of their inheritance? That an individual should not make good use of his opportunities is something which society cannot prevent. But it certainly can prevent his being deprived of reasonable opportunities to live a healthy and useful life.

But though the advance of knowledge

increases our sense of responsibility it brings with it an exhilarating sense of freedom. Necessary evils there must always be, and we must summon strength to bear them. But the conviction grows that a vast amount of evil which has been patiently borne is in reality unnecessary. The field of effective moral action has broadened, and the chances of success have increased. Because certain evils have always existed is no reason why they should continue. It only means that greater skill and more persistent work are called for. It is a difficult but not an impossible task that is proposed.

To abolish grinding poverty, to outwit the forces of corruption, actually to prevent preventable diseases, to plan cities for the comfort and well-being of

the citizens, to take away from necessary labor unnecessary hardships and degradation, to prevent social deterioration, to distribute more equitably the rewards of industry — these are not the vague ideals of the sentimentalist: they are the specifications of work to be done; they involve problems which specialists are working on.

A seventeenth-century poet exclaimed: —

O holy Hope and high Humility.

To the holy hope of prophets and saints has been added the high humility of the man of science. There is nothing, he says, unreasonable in the hope, but it is to be fulfilled not after the apocalyptic manner, by a miraculous intervention of an unrelated force. It is to be wrought

out through patient experimentation. The civilization of to-day is the result of the work of the generations that have gone before us. They had high ideals, but imperfect knowledge and clumsy tools. They fell far short of their ideals. With greater knowledge and better tools and finer skill to use them, we and our children must certainly be able to accomplish much which to them was impossible.

The hope of the world lies in the fact that men are beginning to do intelligently what they have always attempted. It is less and less true that

> The good want power but to weep barren tears.
> The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.
> The wise want love, and those who love want wisdom;
> And all best things are thus confused to ill.

We are beginning to see that this divorce between the intellect and the conscience is not a fatalistic necessity of being. We cannot conceive of human progress save as we think of goodness grown wise and skillful. And when it grows wise and skillful, it grasps the lordship of the earth.

III

LOVE

We have been watching successive phases of a great battle for human freedom. We have seen a creature emerging from the dust of the earth and at first hardly to be differentiated from other creatures, developing powers that are creative. At first merely passive under the moulding power of circumstances, man develops moral initiative. He no longer floats upon the current, he struggles against it. We first wonder at the audacity of the attempt, and then marvel at the increase of skill which it develops. We cannot, as we watch the long-continued effort, fail to see that

human will and human intellect are steadily gaining. The strong wise man, in whose brain are the results of the experience of the race, has emerged. This man does not cower before destiny, he is not overcome by the horror of great darkness. He has overcome a thousand difficulties. His courage has grown intelligent and resourceful. Never has there been such consciousness of power.

The triumphs of science mark the defeat of the older forms of fatalism. Human effort is seen not to be futile but fruitful beyond the anticipation of the sages. Blind forces yield to will guided by intelligence. Man can outwit nature. Materialism of the old crude sort has become unthinkable.

Just now philosophers are putting their emphasis not on the properties of

matter or on the invariable sequences of physics, but on the phenomena of life. Their philosophy is vitalistic rather than materialistic. We must study life at first hand, and not be content with analogies drawn from the inanimate world. The living creature acts differently from the non-living thing. To be alive means to exercise mysterious power, and the more alive any creature is the more the mystery deepens.

A machine does the same thing over and over again. When we have thoroughly understood it, we may make another machine which will be practically identical with it and which will produce the same results. But this is not true of a living being. When we think we see identity, it is because our

slow perceptions do not follow the marvelously quick changes which take place. It is like the conventional picture of a galloping horse. It does not represent truly what actually takes place.

Life persists and evolves as an endless succession of changes. These changes are unpredictable, because they depend upon the coincidence of so many forces. A knowledge of a lower form of life gives no answer to the question as to the emergence and survival of a higher form. What we call growth is a kind of change which baffles the understanding. The living creature is continually escaping from its old forms, and creating new ones. When we have watched the process we accept it as a fact. But no one, before the event, could have anticipated what was to take place.

Now when we turn to the contemplation of life and its ways, we are conscious that we are threatened with another form of fatalism. The vision comes of perpetual change through evolving life. Here is an impulse which moves us. But can we hope to master it?

Courage and Skill are alike baffled. Milton speaks of "fixed fate." A brave man may defy a fixed fate. He may oppose to it a fixed determination. There is something to resist. But Emerson expresses a more modern conception when he speaks of the "flowing fates." What if everything is in perpetual flux? Life is a river flowing through an ocean. We are not, as the materialist would say, the drops of water moved by the current. Our vital impulses move inanimate things. Our lives are moving

powers. But whither do they move? We are awed by the incalculable possibilities of our own natures. Below our consciousness we become aware of the "abysmal deeps of personality."

With sufficient skill we can master machinery. It is something which intellect can invent and control. It is a case of the higher ruling the lower to its own good. But a vital process is different. We cannot invent it. It does not yield its secret to thought. Life is continually transcending itself. Its history is a succession of surprises. By the time you have described one phase of its development it has become something else.

It is the instability of life that puzzles us. That which we try to grasp slips away from us and assumes a different

form. And we ourselves because we are alive are never the same. We awake in the morning to complete yesterday's task. But yesterday has vanished, and yesterday's enthusiasms. We cannot by taking thought restore the exact situation. Is there not then a fatal necessity that nothing should really be finished, or if finished according to a former plan should not satisfy us?

A child busies himself constructing a play-house and filling it with all things which he thinks desirable. After a few years he returns to the work of his hands, a stranger to its joys. The years have brought disenchantment. He has outgrown his playthings.

This is the tragedy of growth. It means the outgrowing of that which once gave satisfaction. We all feel it

when we return after many years to once familiar places. But the process itself is a continuous one. It goes on from hour to hour, through innumerable, imperceptible transitions.

It follows that the more definite our plans for the future the more certain we are to be disappointed. The mechanical arrangements we can control, and the results we can predict. Here everything can be well-timed. But what of ourselves and our friends whom we think of as enjoying the triumph? Who can predict the changes which may turn the expected joy into bitterness?

When we come to follow closely the lives of able men whom we have looked upon as eminently successful, we often find that they themselves are overwhelmed with a sense of failure. It

is not that they have failed to achieve that which they intended, but that they have failed to receive the satisfaction they anticipated out of their achievements. The very definiteness of their plans and the completeness of their arrangements leaves nothing further for them to do. Now that the thing they planned has been accomplished, it seems to have been inevitable. It is accepted and ignored as one of the mass of commonplace facts.

But while they have been working diligently and efficiently, other things have happened which they, in their absorption in their own affairs, have not noticed. These other happenings have also their results, and a new condition has arisen, and a new standard of values.

It is as if a merchant-adventurer had, with a rich cargo in the hold, set out on a voyage to a distant market. Many are the tempests through which the good ship passes. The skillful mariner finds his way in safety along perilous coasts. At last he enters the desired haven, only to find the market overstocked. There is no demand for what he has with such difficulty carried around the world. The cargo is safe but it has lost a large part of its value.

This is the common experience of the able man of affairs. The things which, when he was doing them, seemed so important, once accomplished seem to sink into utter insignificance.

Many a great man of business accumulates wealth, not from any sordid motive, but in order to enjoy, as he sup-

poses, the increased consideration of his fellow-men. It is to him the symbol of power. But while he is gaining it the ethical standards of the community have changed. The methods which in his youth were admired as indications of shrewdness, are looked upon with reprobation. He has outlived his generation, and stands a pathetic lonely figure exposed to a kind of criticism which he cannot understand. The very genuineness of his self-revelations adds to the pathos of the situation. It is one of the tragedies of ethical progress. Something has happened to rob him of the satisfactions of success and he does not know what it is.

A similar fatality is seen in the management of the most intimate and sacred relation of life. The making of a home

requires the exercise of intelligence. Many are those who undertake to teach the high art. And yet it is a notorious fact that many of those who are most intelligent and conscientious make a miserable failure in attaining happiness.

In all the mechanical arrangements for giving comfort they exhibit skill. In all that is formal in conduct they are beyond reproach. Whatever is in its nature definite in the relation between husband and wife, parents and children, is carefully attended to. But there is an indefinite something that eludes all the well-meant efforts.

A man of strong will and clear judgment attempts to train his children in the way in which they should go. He surrounds them with all influences

which commend themselves as good. He has a very definite plan for their careers, and furnishes them with means for fitting them to succeed. He has a keen eye for what he calls "advantages." Education is a game of skill, and he is the player. Each move is carefully considered, with all its consequences.

But after a time he begins to realize that the game is not so simple as he had imagined. Each piece upon his chessboard is alive and develops a will of its own. While he is considering how he shall move them next, they are making a hundred moves for themselves. And the moves have been so quick and unexpected that his intelligence cannot follow them. Each child has a temperament of its own, and reacts in its own way. Every year the confusion grows

greater as their natures increase in complexity.

At last the fateful day comes when the father for the last time attempts to exert his authority. He gives a command to his child, expecting prompt and complete obedience. But the child is no longer there. He is confronted by another man, his equal, perhaps his superior, in strength of will.

The great benefactors of mankind have experienced the same kind of bewilderment. Very seldom have they enjoyed the fruit of their labors in the way they imagined. The dramatic moment of complete triumph never comes.

The story of great inventors has had always an element of personal disappointment. It is not merely that they have at times been robbed of their right-

ful rewards by unscrupulous promoters. The difficulty is deeper than that. No invention is as original as its inventor thinks it is. When after years of patient groping he announces his great discovery, he finds that many others have been working on very much the same lines. He is but one of a great company. He was lonely while he was at work, his success he must share with a crowd. And when his invention has been made, there are those who can improve upon it. The more important his contribution to thought is, the more quickly it is absorbed in the common stock of the world.

In pure science the greatest men are often unknown to the great public. They discover some principle which suggests to other minds practical applications,

which they themselves may not have seen or thought important. Their contributions do not remain as a body of truth to be called by their own name. They are forgotten while their work becomes the property of mankind.

Even when their names remain they are not connected with their real personality. George Eliot, in "The Legend of Jubal," recites such an experience. Jubal, the inventor of instruments of music, in his old age traveled far in search of inspiration. At last there came the desire to return to his home and enjoy the triumph due to him.

"No farther will I travel: once again
My brethren I will see, and that fair plain
Where I and Song were born. There fresh-voiced youth
Will pour my strains with all the early truth

Which now abides not in my voice and hands,
But only in the soul, the will that stands
Helpless to move. My tribe remembering
Will cry, ' 'T is he ! ' and run to greet me, welcoming."

Jubal came at last to the land where his great work had been done.

For still he hoped to find the former things,
And the warm gladness recognition brings.

But alas, instead of such warm recognition of his worth,

He saw dread Change, with dubious face and cold,
That never kept a welcome for the old,
Like some strange heir upon the hearth, arise,
Saying, " This home is mine."

At length he heard the instruments of music, and youths and maidens, with lyres and cymbals and flutes, danced in their glad festival. The old man's ardor was aroused, and led him to self-assertion.

All was forgotten but the burning need
To claim his fuller self, to claim the deed
That lived away from him, and grew apart,
While he as from a tomb, with lonely heart,
Warmed by no meeting glance, no hand that pressed,
Lay chill amid the life his life had blessed.

Then he cried with a loud voice, "I am Jubal, I!—I made the lyre!"

But the years had separated Jubal not only from his work but from his fame. His name had become the name not of a person but of an Art. For him to claim it was profanation.

The multitude was first merry and then angry over his preposterous claim. At last

Two rushed upon him: two, the most devout
In honor of great Jubal, thrust him out,
And beat him with their flutes.

When we turn from History to Biog-

raphy we learn the bitter meaning of the legend. It lies in the fact that men are by the mere fact of living disassociated from their own works. The historian follows a great movement. It begins in the fervent desire of a few obscure men. It gains disciples, it enlists in its behalf able leaders. It inspires to all sorts of heroic sacrifices. At last the good cause triumphs. It seems a record of orderly progress from beginning to end.

But we turn to the life-history of any leader in the movement, and we have a different impression. If he happens to live long we are conscious of an anticlimax. There is a period when the man and his cause coincide. The reformer is the perfect embodiment of the reform to which he gives his energies.

He is lifted above himself, and his name at the same time stands for a person and a principle.

So for a dramatic moment Luther expressed the yearnings for liberty in the minds of the German people. He was the Reformation. So Mazzini, and afterwards Garibaldi, had moments in their lives when they personally realized the aspirations of the New Italy. So John Bright in his great days identified himself completely with all that was generous and progressive in English politics.

But the time came when the movements developed on lines which the early leaders had not anticipated, and took on forms strange to them. Luther was almost driven to distraction by the various sects which arose from his brave

insistence upon the right of private judgment. It was no longer Luther's reformation, but the reformation of the sixteenth century that went on. And it went on in many strange ways which to the great reformer seemed destructive of all religion.

Italian unity came, but not in the way that either Mazzini or Garibaldi approved. They lived long enough to realize that they were only tools used for a certain purpose, and then thrown aside. Other workmen with other tools took up the work which had once been theirs.

Even John Bright, the most successful of reformers, lived long enough to find himself out of sympathy with the party of advance. The definite reforms to which he had given his life had been accepted as a part of the existing order.

But a new generation had arisen with its own ideals and purposes. With these he had little sympathy or understanding. The eloquent agitator had to appear to them as a reactionary.

What is the common element in all these instances? In each case the disappointment comes from something inherent in the vital process. There is a change which we are not prepared for. A man who does a good deed cannot put it in a safe deposit vault to be given back to him when he calls for it. The deed once done is his no longer. It enters into the life of the world and is transformed beyond his recognition. It becomes a "good diffused."

The fate of Jubal was that of one who wrought better than he knew. Had he

invented a lyre upon which no one but himself could play, his fame would have been secure,— and his art would have perished with him. He would have been remembered as a miracle worker. He did a wonderful thing which could never be repeated.

But he invented instruments upon which others could make music and which they could improve upon. And so the art grew and the importance of his personality diminished.

Here then we have the complaint against the vital process itself. It is that it has no stability of form. It is a perpetual change which interferes with our possession of the fruits of our own labor. The ambitious man is like a collector of beautiful works of art, who has no place to put the treasures he has gathered. He

can do nothing with them but give them away.

Now so long as our aims end in ourselves all this seems very sad. We are cheated out of what belongs to us.

But what if another impulse should take possession of us so that we no longer should seek to have everything end in ourselves? What if we should come to care supremely for something quite beyond ourselves, and relate everything to that? Immediately what had been our grievance becomes our opportunity.

Now that great transforming impulse is that to which we give the name of Love. It is that which disenthralls a man by making him free from the trammels of his own selfishness. "Love seeketh not its own." Love chooses to

share the good it finds. It rejoices in its ability to give away all that has been given to it.

It is love and only love that can follow life through all its changes. It is not bound to a single form, but says "Whither thou goest I will go." It is a new kind of consciousness which changes our relation to all that is about us. It gives us something which no amount of intelligence can give.

Let us imagine a great tree in which roots and trunk and branches and leaves have come to consciousness. The separate parts realize their own existence and their own special functions. The intelligent root delves in the earth purposefully, and rejoices when it has found its food. The leaf knows itself to

be what it is, and watches eagerly the processes of its own growth. By and by the sense of responsibility comes, and each acquires skill and does its appointed work better. And each out of its own limited experience reasons. Each draws inferences from what has happened in its own sphere, and ventures upon large generalizations. The leaf argues that other leaves have functions like its own. They belong to a comprehensible order. But of the roots that burrow in the dark places, and are never gay in the sunshine, it knows, and can know, nothing. They do not belong to the intelligible world. And after a time the wind grows chill, and it sees its fellow leaves, its summer companions, grow faint and let go their hold upon the branches, and float away it knows

not whither. This then is the end of all. There is nothing further of which it is conscious. It only knows that it is fated so to be. At any moment its turn may come, as it goes the way of all the living.

The reasoning, we say, was valid as far as it went, but the experience on which it was founded was not complete. The leaf was conscious of *itself*, but it was not conscious of itself as a part of the tree. The thrill of the larger life would have changed resignation into the joyous acceptance of a high privilege.

Suppose the tree consciousness were to take possession of the leaf. It would be an overpowering sense of vital energy going out in all directions. The same power which makes the buds swell upon the twigs, works underground in

the hungry roots. The seasons come and go but the tree makes increase of itself. Everything is thought of in its relation to this wonderful life.

Now that is the kind of consciousness that we call love. It is the consciousness of ourselves not as isolated individualities but as sharers in a larger life. It is the immediate apprehension of an indivisible whole. To one who has entered into this consciousness everything has a new value. It is valued not for what it brings in, this is a comparatively worthless residuum; but for what it enables one to give.

Nor does love, when it has been purified from grosser elements, attach itself merely to the present form. The fond mother may indeed sometimes say that she wishes her child might never grow

up, but always remain dependent on her care. But she knows that is not true love but only selfishness. The mother follows her child through all the growing years, rejoicing in his increasing strength. And when the hour of parting comes and the son goes forth to try his fortunes in the world, the mother love grows stronger. It is a power which overcomes the influence of change. And as it is said of love that it "seeketh not its own," so it is said that it "taketh not account of evil." This does not mean that it denies the existence of evil. Evil is treated as irrelevant. Love taketh no account of evil, not because it does not see it but because it *sees through it.* Sin, sorrow, suffering — these are facts which are opaque to the cold understanding. But there are other rays that shine through

them, finding no obstruction. Love sees the perfect through the imperfect; it discerns "the soul of goodness in things evil."

This clairvoyance is manifest in all finer judgments. There is a selective power which unerringly finds excellence. Two persons are looking at a picture. One looks at it unimaginatively and unappreciatively. He sees that the canvas is old, the colors are faded, there are obvious defects of drawing. Seeing these things he passes the picture with contempt. He can justify his scorn by a catalogue of the details which offend him. But after the fault-finder there comes an enthusiastic lover of art. Does he not see the defects? Yes; but he takes no account of them. They do not interfere with his enjoy-

ment. The picture represents an important stage in the development of art. It is from the hand of a master. The master shared with his contemporaries many faults, and he had mannerisms of his own. But his genius shines through.

When true artists are talking together how joyous and free they are! It is because each is conscious of something beyond what he himself has accomplished. There are so many different forms of beauty, and varying degrees of excellence. They are not seeking uniformity. They are exploring a pleasant region where each turn of the road has a charm of its own.

The lover of Nature has the same experience. What he delights in is not the perfection of a single form, but the wonder of an endless process. He is

pleased with the exuberance of life. There are many things which interfere with his comfort; and he is glad that it is so. There are weeds and thorns, there are thickets hard to penetrate, there are wild things that hide themselves at his approach. But these things do not irritate him. He is soothed and inspired by the manifold life around him, and of which he is a part.

The same thing is true in regard to human intercourse. The philanthropist and the misanthropist have before them precisely the same facts. One may be as realistic as the other. But their minds react differently. Human nature in its actual imperfectness is the theme of all realistic literature.

The unloving realist declares that he will rid his mind of all sentimentality

and show us human character as it actually is. With painstaking art he reproduces an actual situation. He lays bare the working of the mind, and points out the unworthy motives which enter into acts which we had been taught to admire. He analyzes the conventional hero and reveals the sordid elements in his nature. He reveals every weakness which mars his best endeavor. Then with cold impartiality he passes judgment on the sum total of the qualities which he has discovered. It is a pitiable showing.

Then we turn to the really great works of literature. The man of genius —just because he has genius — is one who not only sees clearly, but loves the thing he sees. He makes no attempt to disguise the imperfection which be-

longs to all that is human. He is no apologist for things as they are. This is a world in which men sin and suffer for their sins. He does not give us an expurgated edition of the universe. There are ugly facts and untamed passions and unanswered questions. The real world is so big that it is easy to lose one's way in it. The wisest lose their way often and only by much effort find it again. Human nature is complex and character is not adjusted to circumstance with mechanical precision. The actual course of human conduct is never as straight as it appears in the moral tale. There are many devious windings and strange surprises. There is a seamy side even to the lives of saints, and great men do not always retain the heroic attitude.

But all this is of little importance to the lover of mankind. His heart was not set on a monotony of excellence. He is free and cheerful in the presence of human imperfection. He is with eager eyes watching a vital process. He does not see perfect creatures, but he sees something which to him is much more appealing. He sees imperfect creatures striving for a more perfect form of existence. He sees them under all varieties of circumstance tending upward. Their very mistakes and failures make them dear to him. He rejoices in their small successes. He sees those whose lives have been most disappointing in moments of heroism. These sudden flashes reveal their real selves. He sees how men learn from their mistakes. They are always blundering, but the same blunders are

not precisely repeated. He comes to feel that the obstacles in the path of humanity are great but not insuperable.

O benefit of ill, now I find true
That better is by evil still made better
And ruined love when it is built anew
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.

This doctrine of "the benefit of ill" is not the fatalistic doctrine that evil of itself works for good. It is rather the belief in the supremacy of love, the power that turns all things to its own uses. Out of old ruins it is continually building new and fairer habitations for itself.

We have tried to show that liberty is not a gift of Nature. It is an achievement. A man is free in proportion to his Courage, Skill, and Love. These are the Lords of Destiny.

To choose one's own path and to abide by the decision, to follow an inner light, to resist the world's threat and fashion —this is to gain independence. It is the achievement of simple courage.

To study and observe, to make use of the accumulated experience of mankind, to become inventive and skillful in all good works, this is to gain mastery over natural forces.

To give one's self to others, to rejoice in the good that one does not seek to monopolize, to follow life lovingly through all its bewildering changes, to rejoice in all its variety and richness — this is to be free indeed. It is through love to "lay hold on eternal life."

THE END

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